

# M-4 Carbine Shotgun Attachment Being Fielded in Afghanistan

*Story and photos by  
Spc. Zia Ul Haq  
211th Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment*

**Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan** – There is a new toy on the playground and the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division is the first to have it. Dismounted Battlespace Battle Lab (DBBL), a department of defense equipment testing unit from Ft. Benning, GA. is fielding the new XM-26 shotgun manufactured by C-More Systems, from Manassas, VA.



This is the 5<sup>th</sup> version of the XM-26 shotgun attachment for the M-4 carbine. The 2 pound, 11 ounce shotgun is 16.5 inches long, weighs less than the M-203 grenade launcher, and utilizes the M-4 sights. It is a manual bolt action weapon that can be used by right or left handed soldiers. The shotgun can fire lethal, non-lethal, less than lethal, and door breaching rounds.

"The unique part about the [XM-26] is that when soldiers go to breach a door, rather than sling their M-4 and pull up a separate shotgun, all they have to do is take their finger from the rifle trigger [move it] to the shotgun trigger, and they are still ready to use their primary

weapon," said Michel E. Kennedy, project officer and analyst with DBBL.

10<sup>th</sup> Mountain put in an urgent operational need statement for the shotgun and 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corp chose them to be the first unit to receive the shotgun, stated Kennedy.

"We issued 45 (shotguns) to 2-22 Infantry Battalion, 46 to 1-87 Infantry Battalion, and 18 to the 41<sup>st</sup> Engineers, said Kennedy.

This weapon will also be fielded at Bagram Air Field with 2-87 Infantry Battalion and 1-501 Parachute Infantry Regiment. The fielding of this weapon here in Afghanistan will determine if other

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*Medevac Blackhawk #672 flies high above Afghanistan as a part of a resupply ring mission*

## No Matter What...We Will Be There

*Story and photos by  
Spc. C. Elijah Spencer  
211th Mobile Public  
Affairs Detachment*

**Kandahar, Afghanistan** --While the young men and women of the United States Armed Forces are on the front lines fighting for their country, they need not hesitate. They need not doubt their

cause. And, most of all, they should rest assured that with people like the highly motivated, specially trained and skilled soldiers of the 717<sup>th</sup> Aerial Medical Evacuation Company (MEDEVAC) of the New Mexico National Guard, that should they become injured, they will get the best

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# From the Top

## Pres. Bush Proves just how much He Cares



By **TERENCE HUNT**  
AP White House Correspondent

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — President Bush flew to Iraq under extraordinary secrecy and security Thursday to spend Thanksgiving with U.S. troops and thank them for “defending the American people from danger.”

The unannounced visit brought wild cheers from battle-worn soldiers, stunned the nation and even surprised the president’s parents, who had been expecting him at the Thanksgiving table at his Crawford, Texas ranch.

The president returned to U.S. soil early Friday, as his plane landed at Andrews Air Force base outside Washington shortly after midnight, before continuing on to Texas to complete the dramatic journey.

Bush, the first U.S. president to visit Iraq, promised that insurgents testing America’s commitment will not be rewarded with a U.S. retreat.

“We did not charge hundreds of miles into the heart of Iraq, pay a bitter cost of casualties, defeat a ruthless dictator and liberate 25 million people only to retreat before a band of thugs and assassins,” Bush told about 600 soldiers from the 1st Armored Division and the 82nd Airborne.

The troops had been told only that they were gathered for Thanksgiving dinner with a VIP guest in the mess hall at Baghdad International Airport.

L. Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator in Iraq, added his own drama to the surprise. Billed as the special guest along with

coalition forces commander Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, Bremer opened the program by telling the soldiers it was time to read the president’s Thanksgiving proclamation.

He asked if there was “anybody back there more senior than us” to read the president’s words. Bush emerged from behind a curtain as cheering soldiers climbed on chairs and tables to yell their approval.

The president shed a few tears.

“I was just looking for a warm meal somewhere,” he joked, fresh from an 11-hour overseas flight. “Thanks for inviting me to dinner.”

Wearing an exercise jacket with a 1st Armored Division patch, Bush then worked the entire room and dished out - but did not sit down to eat - sweet potatoes and corn from the chow line.

“We thank you for your service, we’re proud of you, and America stands solidly behind you,” he said during brief remarks delivered on a day when Americans count blessings. “You are defending the American people from danger and we are grateful.”

“It’s got to be a lonely moment for them,” Bush said. “I thought it was important to send that message that we care for them (the troops) and we support them strongly, that we erase any doubts in their minds as to whether or not the people stand with them. ... Having seen the reaction of those troops, you know it was the right thing to do.”

The timing of the trip was by its very nature assured to give Bush maximum PR exposure, coming on a day when most Americans were relaxing at home, many watching football games, when the announcement came.

With U.S. forces in Iraq the target of regular, deadly attacks, Bush has been heavily criticized for his policies, particularly from Democrats seeking to turn the



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### **Coalition Task Force**

#### **Warrior Commander:**

Col. William B. Garrett III

#### **Coalition Task Force Warrior**

#### **Command Sgt. Maj.**

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe

#### **10th Mountain Brigade PAO:**

Capt. Kevin K. Dasher

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issue into a political vulnerability for him in next year’s presidential election.

More than five dozen U.S. troops were killed by hostile fire in November, more than any other month since the end of major combat in Iraq on May 1. Since operations began, nearly 300 U.S. service members have died of hostile action, including 183 since May 1.

Insurgents fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the Italian mission in the city, damaging the building but causing no injuries, the U.S. military said. Also, a U.S. military convoy came under attack on the main highway west of Baghdad near the town of Abu Ghraib, witnesses said. And in the northern city of Mosul, unidentified gunmen shot dead an Iraqi police sergeant, said Brig. Gen. Muwaffaq Mohammed.

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“Weekly Quote”

“Sure I am this day we are masters of our fate, that the task which has been set before us is not above our strength; that its pangs and toils are not beyond our endurance. As long as we have faith in our own cause and an unconquerable will to win, victory will not be denied us.”

- *Winston Churchill*



*Soldiers of 2-22 Inf. become more familiar with their new shotgun attachment.*

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units will receive it in the future.

“Right now it is an infantry shotgun with applications for engineers,” said Maj. Trevor W. Shaw, Assistant Product Manager for Individual Weapons, at Picatinny Arsenal, NJ. “If we are talking about non-lethal [rounds] it is possible that the Military Police would also have an application for it,” added Shaw.

Since 1998 the US government has spent about \$250,000 and C-More Systems has spent over \$500,000 in developing the XM-26.

With many different versions of this shotgun tested, the XM-26 shotgun system is finally ready to take on the tasks that it was made to do. The US military now has yet another advantage over the enemy forces in Afghanistan. Breaching doors the old fashioned way with a back up shotgun are a thing of the past.

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But Bush, his visit providing striking images of support for him among the troops, told the soldiers their sacrifices are contributing to the safety of their nation.

“You are defeating the terrorists here in Iraq so we don’t have to face them in our own country,” Bush said. “You’re defeating Saddam’s henchmen so that the people of Iraq can live in peace and freedom.”

In turn, soldiers spoke enthusiastically about the president. “After 13 months in theater, my morale had kind of sputtered,” said Capt. Mark St. Laurent, 36, of Leesburg, Va. “Now I’m good for another two months.”

During his 2 1/2 hours on the ground, Bush also met with four members of the Iraqi Governing Council, Baghdad’s mayor and city council, and with top U.S. commanders.

When Bush’s father visited

U.S. troops at a desert outpost in Saudi Arabia on Thanksgiving Day 1990, in the runup to the first Gulf War, he became the first U.S. president to visit a front-line area since President Nixon went to Vietnam in 1969.

Bush first began discussing a visit to Iraq for Thanksgiving five or six weeks ago, White House communications director Dan Bartlett said. After ordering the planning to proceed during his trip to Asia last month, Bush made the final decision to go on Wednesday, after a secure video conference call from his ranch with Vice President Dick Cheney, chief of staff Andrew Card and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

White House officials went to extraordinary lengths to keep the trip a secret, fearing its disclosure would prompt terrorist attempts to kill him.

In a ruse staged in the name of security, White House

deputy press secretary Claire Buchanan put out word Wednesday - unknowingly, she said later - that Bush would be spending Thanksgiving in Texas with his wife, Laura, his parents and other family members. She even announced the dinner menu.

Only a handful of the president’s top aides knew about the trip beforehand and Bush told reporters his decision was touch-and-go until the last minute. Even the president’s parents were not told until they arrived at the ranch Thursday morning expecting to see their son for the Thanksgiving meal they would end up eating without him.

Instead, Bush had quietly slipped away from his home on Wednesday evening, in an unmarked vehicle and wearing a ballcap pulled down low over his forehead. He flew to Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington accompanied from Texas by two reporters and a few photographers

summoned only hours before. There, he picked up a few aides and some more reporters sworn to secrecy, and made the switch to another plane inside a huge hangar for the long flight.

It was evening in Baghdad when the president’s plane - which had flown the whole trip with its lights darkened and window blinds closed - landed under a crescent moon, with Bush himself in the cockpit to watch Air Force One pilot Col. Mark Tillman “bring it in.”

“Had security been broken, that would have been a time when we would have been most vulnerable,” Bush said.

Even then, the news of Bush’s trip was not released until he was in the air on the way back to the United States.

“If this breaks while we’re in the air we’re turning around,” Bartlett had told reporters.

It didn’t.

# WORLD NEWS



## Soldiers Search Afghan Copter Wreckage

By THOMAS WAGNER  
Associated Press Writer

BAGRAM, Afghanistan (AP) — Soldiers on Monday combed through the wreckage of a transport helicopter carrying U.S. troops that crashed just north of the capital, killing five Americans and injuring seven.

The cause of Sunday's crash, about 7 miles east of Bagram Air Base, the main U.S. military base in Afghanistan, was not immediately known.

The MH-53 transport helicopter was on a mission connected to Operation Mountain Resolve, a large U.S. military sweep launched Nov. 7 in eastern Nuristan and Kunar provinces hunting for Taliban and al-Qaida militants, U.S. military spokesman Maj. Richard Sater said.

The wreckage of the helicopter was broken into three pieces, some of which had fallen into a mostly dry river bed north of Kabul. About 15 U.S. soldiers were guarding the site, searching through the wreckage.

The military said it was investigating the cause.

"I saw the helicopter crashing, breaking into pieces and catching fire," Maraj Jan, a local resident, said. Jan said he didn't see anything strike the aircraft, such as a missile, before the crash occurred around sunset.

A statement sent by e-mail from U.S. Central Command, in Tampa, Fla., on Sunday said: "Early reports indicate

seven service members were injured and at least five service members were killed" in the crash.

The MH-53 transport helicopter is one of the military's biggest helicopters. Versions of the MH-53 are capable of carrying up to 55 passengers along with a crew of six. The military did not say how many soldiers were on the craft that crashed.

Bagram Air Base is home to most of the 11,600 coalition forces in Afghanistan. An additional 5,500 international peacekeepers patrol Kabul.

Also Sunday, a coalition vehicle struck a remote-controlled bomb while patrolling an area of Afghanistan near the Pakistani border, seriously wounding two American soldiers, including one who lost one of his legs.

Six journalists, two each from Fox television, CBS' "60 Minutes II" show and The New York Times were traveling in the convoy of coalition's 10th Mountain Division forces in eastern Afghanistan, the U.S. military said in a statement issued at Bagram Air Base. The CBS and New York Times reporters were in the vehicle that was knocked over by the explosion, suffering minor injuries, the statement said.

The explosion occurred at about 1 p.m. in Shkin, Paktika province, about 135 miles south of Kabul, the Afghan capital. A coalition base also is located there.

The wounded soldiers were identified as Staff Sgt. Roy Mitchell, of Batesville, Ind., and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Eichner, of Stonington, Pa., officials at Fort Drum in New York state said.

Mitchell, 32, suffered burns to his face, neck and back, and had his left leg amputated. Eichner, 31, was wounded by shrapnel in his back and had a broken hand, the officials said. The soldiers were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment.

Some 35 Americans have died from hostile fire in Afghanistan since the October 2001 start of the Afghan war, according

to the U.S. military. An American soldier taking part in the Mountain Resolve operation was killed Nov. 14 when his vehicle struck a land mine, and last month two CIA agents were killed in an ambush in the eastern Afghan border town of Shkin.

Eastern and southern Afghanistan have become hotbeds of attacks by pro-Taliban and pro-al-Qaida militants targeting coalition forces, U.N. workers and relief agencies.

On Friday, the violence hit Kabul when a rocket landed about 30 yards from the Intercontinental Hotel, shattering glass but causing no injuries. The hotel, a favorite among foreign visitors, is also near the site of an upcoming loya jirga, or grand council, set to ratify a new constitution in December.

A week ago, a French woman who worked with the U.N. High Commissioner of Refugees organization, Bettina Goisard, 29, was gunned down by suspected Taliban militants in the southern city of Ghazni. She became the first international aid worker to be killed in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime two years ago.

## Army Reservist Accused of Insubordination

By BEN DOBBIN  
Associated Press Writer

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — Capt. Steve McAlpin, a 25-year Army reservist, spent most of last year deployed in Afghanistan and just returned home in January. Now his unit is about to ship out again, and he's facing insubordination charges for criticizing the quick turnaround.

McAlpin questioned the legality of a waiver that his battalion was asked to sign that would put his unit back in a combat zone after just 11 months at home. Under federal law, he pointed out, troops are allowed a 12-month "stabilization period." On Wednesday, members of his

**Cont. next pg.**

# WORLD NEWS

401st Civil Affairs Battalion are being deployed for duty overseas, but McAlpin likely won't be among them. A memorandum this week notified him that he was being removed from the 401st's battle roster, and he said he could also face other punishment, including a court martial and losing rank.



The commander, Lt. Col. Phillip Carey, charges in the memo that McAlpin had a "negative attitude" and was being "insubordinate towards the leadership" of the 401st.

McAlpin said he questioned the waiver last Saturday during a teleconference with Col. Guy Sands, commander of the McAlpin's parent unit, the 360th Civil Affairs Brigade based in Fort Jackson, S.C.

About a dozen other officers refused to sign the waiver, as well as four enlisted soldiers called to redeploy, McAlpin said.

"Soldiers are proud to serve any time, anywhere. I'd go tomorrow," McAlpin said from his home in Victor, 20 miles south-east of Rochester. "But I have four soldiers that don't want to go."

The memorandum sent Wednesday commands McAlpin to clear up his affairs at the unit by Monday, when it bans him from battalion grounds. It also transfers

him to the Individual Ready Reserves, whose soldiers can be called up in the event of a national emergency.

Instead of signing the reprimand document, McAlpin attached a note of protest, stating his performance evaluations have been excellent and that his record shows "no pattern of incompetence." He also plans to meet with a military attorney.

"We signed up to fight our nation's enemies and we are fully prepared to do that. But if they're going to usurp the laws of this country at the expense of our most precious asset, our soldiers, then I will not stand for that, not for a minute."

McAlpin served in Bosnia in 1996. Last year, while stationed at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, he was a liaison to local warlords, coordinated humanitarian relief supplies and organized an English-language teaching program.

"I'm looking at something I love more than just about anything - my service to the Army and my fellow soldiers - and they're trying to stab me in the back," McAlpin said.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, he said, "we need every soldier we can muster," but he said the military should also "honor soldiers that have gone already" by giving them "a break from the hazards of combat."

A spokesman for the 401st, Capt. Brian Earley, said McAlpin's questioning of the waiver was only one reason he was being disciplined. Individual members of the 401st are allowed to refuse to sign the waiver, but Earley said McAlpin was "butting in" for other soldiers.

"People who were on the mission, who wanted to go, he was questioning their orders," Earley said. "He was pursuing a non-issue."

Earley said the military was also taking action because of "an accumulation of things," including difficulties in one of his previous missions to Afghanistan. He declined to elaborate.

"There's a lot of soldiers we're not sending because they have one issue or another," Earley said. "It's important that we put together a solid team. Not all soldiers are ready, even though they think they are, to deploy."



## USS Cole Heads Out for Overseas Deployment

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — The USS Cole and its crew of 340 pulled out of port Saturday for the destroyer's first overseas deployment since it was bombed by terrorists three years ago in Yemen's port of Aden.

A crowd of about 100 family members watched as the ship left the Naval Station Norfolk at 12:55 p.m.

"The families are sad to see their sailors leave, but they know they have a job," said Lt. j.g. Kelley Anderson, a Navy spokeswoman.

The guided-missile destroyer was brought back to the United States and underwent \$250 million in repairs at Northrop Grumman's Ingalls shipyard in Mississippi following the Oct. 12, 2000, attack. Two suicide bombers had driven an explosive-packed boat into the side of the Cole, tearing a large hole in the ship.

The explosion killed 17 crew members, wounded 39 and nearly sank the destroyer.

Earlier this week, Yemeni security forces captured the suspected mastermind of the attack, Mohammed Hamdi al-Ahdal. A U.S. counterterrorism official in Wash-

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ington who confirmed the Tuesday capture said al-Ahdal had been among the top 20 al-Qaida figures at large.

The Cole and two other destroyers in the Norfolk-based Surface Strike Group, the USS Thorn and USS Gonzalez, are now scheduled to head to the Mediterranean Sea for about six months, Anderson said. They officially are part of the Enterprise carrier strike group, which left in October.

The three ships had been scheduled to leave Friday, but 10-foot to 14-foot waves along its planned route prompted the Navy to delay the departure.



### Two Get 18 Years; Tried to Join Taliban

By **ANDREW KRAMER**  
Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Two American Muslims who tried to join the Taliban were sentenced to 18 years in prison Monday during a hearing in which they denounced the Bush administration and pleaded in song for freedom.

Patrice Lumumba Ford, 32, and Jeffrey Leon Battle, 33, had pleaded guilty in October to conspiracy to levy war against the United States.

Both said that in trying to reach Afghanistan, they were fulfilling their Islamic duty to defend fellow Muslims.

"The attack on Afghanistan killed and maimed thousands of people without achieving its objective," said Ford, who had traveled to China in an unsuccessful

attempt to reach Afghanistan. "I refuse to stand passive in the face of such policies."

Ford, once an intern at Portland's City Hall, said he felt obliged to defend his fellow Muslims against "President Bush's cruise-missile diplomacy."

Ford also assailed the crackdown on Muslim radicals after Sept. 11, which he said was calculated more to score political points than pursue justice.

"I don't think that anybody with a conscience could participate in the prosecutions of this country," he said.

U.S. District Judge Robert E. Jones admonished Ford by saying: "You do not represent the Muslim faith. Muslims do not engage in the activities you engaged in. You are an insult to that faith."

Jones also brushed aside Ford's claim that he was motivated by a humanitarian desire to help Afghan civilians, saying Ford had clearly intended to join the Taliban as a foot soldier and would have killed U.S. soldiers if he had a chance.

"If you had been on the firing line, you would have killed an American," Jones said.

Battle, a former Army reservist, also spoke of his obligations as a Muslim and concluded by singing a 10-minute song he said he had written in prison. The courtroom was silent during the song, which ended with the stanza, "Free, free, free, for all humanity, release me."

Battle and Ford were among six people accused of conspiring to travel to Afghanistan in 2001 and fight U.S. troops after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. A seventh was charged with providing financial support.

Four of the others pleaded guilty, and a fifth was killed in a shootout in Pakistan.



### Taliban Releases Turkish Engineer

**KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)** — Taliban insurgents freed a Turkish road engineer who was kidnapped a month ago in southern Afghanistan, a provincial governor said Sunday.

The governor of southern Ghazni province said engineer Hasan Onal was now in the hands of the Afghan government. A senior Taliban official had earlier said Onal was released to tribal elders late Saturday.

"Finally we have succeeded in persuading Taliban commander Mullah Rozi Khan to release the Turkish engineer," Gov. Haji Asad Ullah Khan told The Associated Press.

Onal, an employee of the Turkish company Gulsan-Cukurova, was abducted Oct. 30 along with his Afghan driver while returning by car to a camp for construction workers repairing the Kabul-Kandahar highway. The driver was freed soon after with a ransom note demanding the release of Taliban prisoners being held in the southern province of Ghazni.

Late Saturday, Mullah Rozi Khan, who described himself as a top Taliban official in southern Zabul province, phoned The Associated Press and other news organizations to announce the release.

"Taliban leaders have decided to hand over the Turkish engineer to tribal elders because he's a Muslim," he said.

The Turkish foreign ministry and an official of Onal's company could not immediately confirm his release. In Kabul, Afghan foreign ministry spokesman Omar Samad said: "We'll confirm it once we see the person."

Khan, the Taliban official, said that the Onal was freed without any "dealing," although he added the decision was taken after the Afghan government released two Taliban prisoners before last week's Islamic holiday of Eid-ul-Fitr.

# SPORTS



## Top-Ranked Oklahoma Becomes King of No. 1

By JOSH DUBOW  
AP Football Writer

Oklahoma is now No. 1 at being No. 1. The Sooners tied Notre Dame for the most No. 1 rankings in The Associated Press college football poll, earning their 95th Sunday. The Sooners (12-0) remained the unanimous pick for the top spot in the rankings after an off week as they prepare for the Big 12 championship game. A win next Saturday against No. 13 Kansas State will give Oklahoma the record to itself.

Ohio State has the third most No. 1 rankings with 73, followed by Miami with 68, and Florida State with 60.

The Sooners, who have been atop each of the 15 polls this season, received all 65 first-place votes in balloting by the panel of sports writers and broadcasters. They are hoping to join Florida State's 1999 team as the only schools to go wire-to-wire since the preseason poll began in 1950.

Oklahoma received the maximum 1,625 points. No. 2 Southern California had 1,555.

There were no changes in the Top 10 this week. LSU remained third, followed by Michigan, Georgia, Texas, Tennessee, Ohio State, Florida State and Miami.

The USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll had the same top six teams as the AP.

Purdue led off the second 10, followed by Iowa, Kansas State, Miami of Ohio, Washington State, Florida, Mississippi, Boise State, TCU and Bowling Green.

West Virginia, Oklahoma State, Nebraska, Maryland and Minnesota round out the poll.

Maryland and Minnesota entered the poll this week, replacing Virginia Tech and Pittsburgh.

The Big Ten, Big 12 and SEC lead all conferences with five teams apiece in the poll. The Pac-10, Big East, ACC and Mid-American all have two teams in the rankings.



## Report: Tiger Woods Gets Engaged

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Wedding bells appear to be in Tiger Woods' future.

A Swedish newspaper says the golf superstar and his Swedish girlfriend, Elin Nordegren, got engaged during a safari vacation in South Africa.

The Tabloid Expressen says Nordegren's father is confirming the engagement.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation says Woods popped the question

at a luxury game park, where the couple went to relax after a golf tournament in South Africa that finished Sunday.

The Swedish newspaper says the date and location of the wedding haven't been disclosed.

Nordegren is a model. She and Woods have dated for about two years



## Neb. Official Explains Solich's Firing

By ERIC OLSON  
Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska fired football coach Frank Solich because athletic director Steve Pederson believed the program was slipping in stature compared to its Big 12 rivals.

"I refuse to let the program gravitate into mediocrity," Pederson said Sunday when he officially announced the firing. "We won't surrender the Big 12 to Oklahoma and Texas."

Despite firing a coach with a 9-3 record this season 58-19 career mark, Pederson said he is not running a "win at all costs" program.

He said he did not like the direction the program was taking. Since starting 11-0 in 2001, the Cornhuskers have been a

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# SPORTS Continued

mediocre 16-12.

Pederson named defensive coordinator Bo Pelini interim head coach for the bowl game. The Huskers' bowl destination has not been determined.

Pederson said he would open a nationwide search for a head coach and hoped to have a successor to Solich named quickly.

Pelini said he would be a candidate for the permanent position.

## Iverson Fined \$10,000 for Obscene Gesture

**PHILADELPHIA (AP)** — Philadelphia 76ers star Allen Iverson was fined \$10,000 by the NBA on Saturday for making an obscene gesture toward fans during a loss in Milwaukee earlier in the week.

Iverson made the gesture in the 76ers' 95-91 loss to the Bucks on Monday. He scored 50 points Saturday night to lead the Sixers over the Atlanta Hawks 98-86.

"I made a mistake and I deserve it," Iverson said of the fine.

## Miami leaves Big East with another title

Miami's reign in the Big East Conference is over. The Hurricanes are leaving the league after 72 victories, eight titles and four consecutive berths in the Bowl Championship Series. They earned the final conference crown with a dominating performance at Pittsburgh on Saturday night.

"It's a great way to leave the league," coach Larry Coker said Sunday, a day after No. 10 Miami's 28-14 win over the Panthers. "We've been a dominant program, let's face it, so we'd hate to leave the league on a negative note."

Miami claimed a share of the conference championship with West Virginia and

likely will play in the Orange Bowl. The opponent might be Ohio State in a rematch of last season's national title game, which the Buckeyes won 31-24 in double overtime.

An official announcement will come next Sunday.

"It would be a rematch, but it would be a totally different game," Coker said, referring to a number of lost players from both teams.

A berth in the Orange Bowl would give the Hurricanes (10-2) a trip to each of the four BCS bowls in as many years. They played in the 2001 Sugar Bowl, the 2002 Rose Bowl and the 2003 Fiesta Bowl.



and a remaining visit to Pittsburgh, few thought Miami could return to a BCS bowl.

But the Hurricanes won their final three games with strong running attacks and solid defensive efforts, the most impressive coming against the Panthers.

Jarrett Payton and Tyrone Moss ran for a combined 246 yards against Pitt's much-maligned defense. Brock Berlin was an efficient 12-of-17 passing for 195 yards with a touchdown and an interception.

And the defense had nine sacks, three interceptions and held Pittsburgh's Larry Fitzgerald to a season-low three catches for 26 yards.

"Our offensive line was dominant, our defensive line was dominant, and basically, game over," Coker said.

Payton ran 17 times for a career-high 131 yards and a touchdown. Moss gained 115 yards on 21 carries and scored twice.

Berlin had a poorly thrown pass picked off on Miami's second possession and was just 3-of-6 for 17 yards in the first quarter. But he was 10-of-12 for 178 yards the rest of the way, including a 45-yard touchdown to Roscoe Parrish in the third quarter.

Miami finished with 475 yards, its second-highest total this season behind 601 yards against Temple.

The defense was even better. Not only did it keep constant pressure on Pitt quarterback Rod Rutherford and shut down Brandon Miree (10 carries, 27 yards), but the defense stifled Fitzgerald, who had caught more than three passes in each of his last 14 games and had at least 100 yards in 10 of 11 games this season.

"What can you say about the defense? Nine sacks, three interceptions. Just a terrific job," Coker said. "You can't get nine sacks on a bag out on the practice field. That's pretty hard. We really, really put a lot of pressure on these guys. It was a tremendous effort by our defensive team."

And it helped land the Hurricanes a fourth straight Big East title and a 72-11 record in conference play in 13 seasons. Miami will move to the Atlantic Coast Conference next season.

"Maybe this was our best game of the year, which that's what you like to see late in years," Coker said. "I did not want to see this team fold in November. We had played too well. This team had done a lot for us to go out with that taste in our mouth."



# HEADLINERS

## Woman Trampled in Fla. Shopping Rush

**ORANGE CITY, Fla. (AP)** — A mob of shoppers rushing for a sale on DVD players trampled the first woman in line and knocked her unconscious as they scrambled for the shelves at a Wal-Mart Supercenter.

Patricia VanLester had her eye on a \$29 DVD player, but when the siren blared at 6 a.m. Friday announcing the start to the post-Thanksgiving sale, the 41-year-old was knocked to the ground by the frenzy of shoppers behind her.

"She got pushed down, and they walked over her like a herd of elephants," said VanLester's sister, Linda Ellzey. "I told them, 'Stop stepping on my sister! She's on the ground!'"

Ellzey said some shoppers tried to help VanLester, and one employee helped Ellzey reach her sister, but most people just continued their rush for deals.

"All they cared about was a stupid DVD player," she said Saturday.

Paramedics called to the store found VanLester unconscious on top of a DVD player, surrounded by shoppers seemingly oblivious to her, said Mark O'Keefe, a spokesman for EVAC Ambulance.

She was flown to Halifax Medical Center in Daytona Beach, where doctors told the family VanLester had a seizure after she was knocked down and would likely remain hospitalized through the weekend, Ellzey said. Hospital officials said Saturday they did not have any information on her condition.

"She's all black and blue," Ellzey said. "Patty doesn't remember anything. She still can't believe it all happened."

Ellzey said Wal-Mart officials called later Friday to ask about her sister, and the store apologized and offered to put a DVD player on hold for her.

Wal-Mart Stores spokeswoman Karen

Burk said she had never heard of a such a melee during a sale.

"We are very disappointed this happened," Burk said. "We want her to come back as a shopper."

## 14,000 Couples Wed in India's Capital

By **ANDREW WANG**  
Associated Press Writer

**NEW DELHI (AP)** — As night fell Thursday, India's capital swarmed with weddings as some 14,000 couples tied the knot on a day considered lucky by Hindus.

Tens of thousands of relatives and friends danced in the streets to popular film music as bridegrooms on horsebacks made their way to marriage ceremonies at parks, temples, banquet halls and farmhouses.

"I hope that I reach my wedding on time," a bride named Jaya said as traffic in parts of New Delhi stalled for hours, with buses, cars and motor scooters sitting idle to give way to wedding processions. "I'm afraid that I won't because there are so many weddings tonight."

Another bride, Prachi, said she didn't care if she was late. "So what?" she said. "It's my lucky day."

Hindu priests considered Thursday auspicious because it was the fourth night after the sighting of the new moon and a festival associated with Ganesha, the elephant-headed god.

Friday will be another busy marriage day, as the wedding anniversary of the god Rama, the hero of the Hindu epic narrative Ramayana.

This nation of 1 billion people is predominantly Hindu, and many parents decide on wedding dates after consulting Hindu priests who determine compatibility by comparing astrological readings for prospective brides and grooms.

The wedding ceremony, which can last

as long as five hours, begins with the couple exchanging marigold garlands. They later walk around a bonfire seven times and are declared husband and wife.

A huge feast, singing and dancing mark the occasion, and a middle-class family can end up spending a minimum of \$8,780. Dowries are high for parents of brides, and friction over the payments sometimes lead to mistreatment of daughters and wives.

## Firefighters Free Teen Stuck in Chimney

**COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)** — A teenager who locked himself out of the house tried to shimmy down the chimney. It didn't work.

Battalion Chief Craig Mosley said firefighters got a call Sunday evening reporting a child stuck in a chimney. When they arrived, they found the youth stuck a few feet from the bottom.

Fire department spokeswoman Kelly McGuire identified the boy as 15-year-old Henry Golatt.

He was small enough to get most of the way down the chimney, which was about a foot wide. But the flue that opens into the house was only 8 inches across.

Mosley says firefighters considered cutting holes in the chimney or dismantling it, but decided on a less destructive approach. They lowered a rope from an aerial ladder and pulled Henry up very slowly.

He lost his pants on the trip up but only his dignity was hurt.

# NFL WEEK 11 SCORES

Sunday, November 30, 2003

Final	1	2	3	4	T
New England (10-2-0) «	10	14	7	7	38
Indianapolis (9-3-0)	0	10	14	10	34

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Arizona (3-9-0)	3	0	0	0	3
Chicago (5-7-0) «	7	0	0	21	28

Final	1	2	3	4	T
San Francisco (5-7-0)	3	3	0	0	6
Baltimore (7-5-0) «	7	17	0	20	44

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Cincinnati (7-5-0) «	7	7	0	10	24
Pittsburgh (4-8-0)	0	3	7	10	20

Final	1	2	3	4	T
New Orleans (6-6-0) «	0	10	7	7	24
Washington (4-8-0)	0	14	3	3	20

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Kansas City (11-1-0) «	7	14	0	7	28
San Diego (2-10-0)	0	7	10	7	24

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Tampa Bay (5-7-0)	0	10	0	0	10
Jacksonville (3-9-0) «	0	10	0	7	17

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Atlanta (2-10-0)	0	7	0	6	13
Houston (5-7-0) «	0	3	14	0	17

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Philadelphia (9-3-0) «	7	3	3	12	25
Carolina (8-4-0)	3	0	7	6	16

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Minnesota (7-5-0)	7	10	0	0	17
St. Louis (9-3-0) «	10	10	14	14	48

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Buffalo (5-7-0) «	0	17	7	0	24
NY Giants (4-8-0)	0	7	0	0	7

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Cleveland (4-8-0)	0	0	0	7	7
Seattle (8-4-0) «	7	10	10	7	34

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Denver (7-5-0) «	0	14	0	8	22
Oakland (3-9-0)	5	3	0	0	8

Courtesy of.



<u>Mon</u>				
Dec 01		Mostly Cloudy	71°/47°	0 %
<u>Tue</u>				
Dec 02		AM Clouds / PM Sun	69°/46°	10 %
<u>Wed</u>				
Dec 03		Partly Cloudy	67°/43°	20 %
<u>Thu</u>				
Dec 04		Partly Cloudy	68°/43°	10 %

## Weekly Weather Forecast

<u>Fri</u>				
Dec 05		Showers	67°/46°	40 %
<u>Sat</u>				
Dec 06		Showers	65°/46°	40 %
<u>Sun</u>				
Dec 07		Mostly Cloudy	70°/46°	20 %

Courtesy of the weatherchannel.com

**Mountain Warrior Weekly** is always accepting comments and suggestions as to how we can improve your newspaper. If you have comments or suggestions, or simply just want to be added to our emailing list, email the staff at  
*Kandaharpresscenter@yahoo.com*



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medical treatment quickly and efficiently.

"We are very proud of what they are doing, we are here to support them and should they fall with an injury we will be there as quickly as possible" said MAJ Jim Bibb, Forward Support Medical Team Commander for the 717<sup>th</sup>, from Santa Fe, NM.

The 717<sup>th</sup> has been in Afghanistan for four months and in that amount of time, they have managed to instill their dedication to the troops they support.

The unit uses UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters equipped with the latest and greatest medical technology. It gives them the capabilities to handle any medical situation they may encounter while on an evacuation mission. This includes everything short of surgery. All within the relatively small confines of these helicopters.

If soldiers fall on the front lines, the skilled and courageous servicemembers of the 717<sup>th</sup> can gear up, ready their equipment, fire up their mounts and be airborne within 30 minutes of getting the call.

"When we get a mission, no one is sitting around," said Bibb, "We don't care where they are, what they are doing or how bad it is, we will go in and evacuate their wounded."

While everyone serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom plays a part in the big puzzle, Bibb likes to think of the 717<sup>th</sup> as "the safety net" for the soldiers.

The 717<sup>th</sup> definitely means what they say when they state that no matter where the injured soldier is, they will come and get them. This is exemplified in what Sgt. David Moya, senior medic, refers to as his most memorable medevac mission.

"I had to get lowered on what we call a jungle penetrator. Down 110 feet, while the helicopter hovered in place, in a very hostile environment, to retrieve a soldier that had been wounded." said Moya, "That one sticks out in my mind as the most memorable...It was tough but nothing but profession and focus is on our minds when we're on a mission."

The medics of the 717<sup>th</sup> work closely with the medical team stationed

at Kandahar Air Field, known as Charlie Med., ensuring that if an aerial evacuation is needed, everyone involved is on the same page, further ensuring that the patients lives are safeguarded. This coordination is essential for the precise and rapid medical care.

All in all, the soldiers of the 717<sup>th</sup> are very good at what they do. They use the utmost precaution, care, and professionalism possible. As long as the sol-

diers of Coalition Task Force Warrior have people like the 717<sup>th</sup> behind them, they should never worry about getting the proper medical attention in the shortest amount of time.

"It just feels good to be able to go out and help someone" said CW3 Susan L. Jordan, from Salina, KS.

"We are there for them. No matter what, we will be there to come and get you and get you out of there."

## *"Join Us in Celebrating Romanian National Day"*

